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Newspaper of the
Canberra University College Students' Association

1956/10

29th AUGUST, 1956

This issue hopefully salutes the new UNIVERSITY OF CANBERRA

The establishment of the University of Canberra was foreshadowed recently by the following statement issued by the Council of the Canberra University College. Student opinion at the College strongly favours the achievement of University status for the College as early as possible.

The Canberra University College was established in 1929 by an Ordinance of the Australian Capital Territory, pending the establishment of a teaching university in Canberra. Arrangements were then made with the University of Melbourne for College students to take the examinations, and be admitted to the degrees of the University of Melbourne. This association has continued up to the present time.

However, in 1946, the Act was passed for the establishment of the Australian National University; the Act gave the University the power to incorporate the

Canberra University College. The University and the College have, over the past two years, given very careful consideration to the question of incorporation. The outcome of these deliberations is contained in a letter received from the Australian National University, the text of which is as follows:

"You are aware from the Vice-Chancellor's letter of 14th April, 1954, that the University has been considering means whereby an incorporation of the University and the College might be achieved, and we are grateful to the members of the Council and staff of the Canberra

University College who helped in the earlier deliberation, and especially to the Principal who has been most patient and understanding.

I am now instructed to ask you to inform your Council that the University believes that the development of the Canberra University College should be planned on the basis of independence of the Australian National University.

In coming to this conclusion the Council has placed much weight on the advice of its academic body which believes that incorporation is not in the best interests of the development of the University as a national research and post-graduate institution. The Board of Graduate Studies is aware, however, that there is already sympathetic co-operation between the two institutions and hopes that this will be maintained and extended."

The Council of the Canberra University College is now giving attention to the next steps to be taken for the future of the College as the institution responsible for undergraduate education in the Australian Capital Territory.

In accordance with the requirements of the Canberra University College Ordinance, the Council will make a report to the Minister for the Interior on the subject as soon as possible.

THE PRINCIPAL

Readers of "Woroni" probably know the present position concerning the possibility of incorporation of the College in the Australian National University. They will be aware that the National University Act of 1946 made provision for the incorporation of the College; but imposed no obligation upon the University to take such a step. On the other hand, the growth of the College in the post-war years has been such as to make it clear that the College is out-growing its present status as a University College associated with the University of Melbourne. The recent transformation of the New England University College into the University of New England has naturally promoted the thought that the time should be ripe for the College to achieve a similar status.

The fact, however, that the National University Act made provision for incorporation, and also conferred upon the National University the power to establish undergraduate courses, made it desirable to explore first of all the possibility of incorporation of the College in the Australian National University. On the face of it there seemed to be strong arguments for such a step. Two full-scale university institutions in a city of the size of Canberra, would, to say the least, be somewhat unusual. Moreover, it seemed that by the development of a common university site it should be possible to make certain economies by the sharing of facilities. Naturally enough too it was thought that the prestige of a degree from the Australian National University would make incorporation acceptable to the College, even though incorporation might mean some limitations upon its autonomy.

However the academic body of the Australian National University took the view that it might jeopardize the development of their post-graduate research schools if the College were incorporated at this stage. The Council of the University was unwilling to take any action contrary to the strongly held views of the academic body, and therefore advised the College to plan its future development on the basis of independence.

Whether the decision of the National University was a wise one is not worth debating at this present juncture. We can only believe that the view was arrived at in good faith, and it should be accepted without recrimination. What is of more concern to us is what happens to the College now, since association with Melbourne is not assured beyond the end of 1957. Moreover it is known that the University of Melbourne feels that the College should now be able to stand upon its own feet, and let go the apron strings of its foster mother.

It is not possible for me to say what decisions will be taken in the near future by the College Council and

the Commonwealth Government; I can only say what I would like to happen and the course of action which I propose to advocate. I hope that the College Council will shortly make a submission to the Commonwealth Government asking for full status for the College as a degree-conferring university as from January 1, 1958. I hope, moreover, that it will ask for the establishment of a Science faculty as from the same date, and for the provision of a hall of residence for students at the earliest possible moment. I hope further that the College will soon be able to obtain a site for the future University of Canberra, a site which will embrace the area on which the College at present stands and as much land adjoining the National University site as it is possible to obtain. I hope that it will be possible to earmark an area of about 150 acres for the University of Canberra in the closest possible proximity to the National University. For even if there is never to be any formal merging of the two institutions my hope is that there will always be the greatest possible collaboration between them. It is beyond question that the closer they are the easier this will be; the easier will it be also to make use of common facilities. It may turn out in the long run that the decision against incorporation of the College has been to the benefit of undergraduate education in Canberra, but it is impossible to say definitely whether this will be so or not. At any rate we should make the best of the situation in which we now find ourselves. One thing is certain; we have outgrown the stage when a further extension of the association with the University of Melbourne is in the best interests of undergraduate education in Canberra.

HERBERT BURTON,
Principal.

immediately and that the new University will attract students from all the southern areas of New South Wales. It would be the southern counterpart of the University of New England, and so help to relieve congestion at the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne.

In considering plans for extending the functions of the College, the needs of its students must be regarded as of paramount importance; there would after all, be no College without them.

I am deeply concerned about the lack of interest in the future of the College shown by its students, for this is a matter of overriding importance to them. It is doubtful if many of them have given the subject the slightest thought. There is an urgent need for action and the Students' Representative Council has not been found wanting. A plan has already been developed and will be submitted to the College Council in the near future.

We will suggest the establishment of full courses in major science subjects; ask that the Board of Studies, in planning courses for degrees in the Faculty of Arts, should dispense with the requirement of a foreign language; and urge that the provision for two years of full-time study as a requisite for an honours degree be dropped. Indeed we will ask much!

If it is fitting for the Council of the Australian National University—a body which wants no part of the C.U.C.—to be represented on the College Council, then it is surely fitting that students of the College, with their vital interest in its affairs and future, should have similar representation . . . and the S.R.C. will propose this to the College Council. And, if this cannot be arranged, we will suggest that the A.N.U., in view of its expressed opinions, should no longer be represented on the College Council. The voice of the students must be heard for they are the College.

A. J. MILLER,
President.

As yet unborn, scarcely her name is spoken,
But, while we wisdom prize and truth debate,
She shall enhance our common wealth and state:
Her birth is humble only to betoken
She is to serve; when her ripe strength is woken
She'll bear both prince and poet, to create
A land to live in, and a land so great
As fairly may ring round her frame unbroken.

We offer no excuses for our youth;
Too often age has shielded want of worth
And reputation buttressed fading powers:
Our claim is but to seek and say the truth
Of babes and sucklings; though but come to birth
We shall be judged by every age; not ours.

PROMETHEUS

AVAILABLE
IN
SEPTEMBER

See page 3 for review by
A. D. Hope

Bruce Truscot, of "Red Brick University" fame, shares the view that the twin functions of a university are teaching and research.

The A.N.U. is solely a research institution and as yet, therefore, it is not a university.

The College, of course, has been a university for years.

—C. L. Hammond

AND THE PRESIDENT

The decision of the Council of the Australian National University against incorporating the Canberra University College was not unexpected. Whether this decision stems from convenience, desirability or plain intellectual snobbery, it is welcomed by many associated with the College.

The College is virtually in the position of the illegitimate child. Its mother, now that she has borne it, no longer wishes to nurture it; its foster-father has expressed the opinion that the child can and should support itself. Who then will look after its welfare? Has the Government sufficient courage to implement legislation establishing the University of Canberra?

There is a strong case for a full scale University to serve Canberra and the southern districts of New South Wales. I am convinced that the establishment of the College as a University proper can be undertaken

A UNIVERSITY FOR THE CAPITAL

There should not be too many regrets that the A.N.U. has at last decided against incorporation of the College. Ten years ago, when A.N.U. was established, our autonomy must have been almost unthinkable and amalgamation our only reasonable future. Now we are fully capable of standing on our own feet.

For fear of embarrassing the College many students have refrained from expressing their opinions on amalgamation; but there can no longer be any objection to our remarking that a large and growing group has been in favour of the autonomy which now seems assured.

With all respect to the University of Melbourne, we have had enough experience of the inevitable delays, misunderstandings and frustrations which accompany remote or divided control to wish to escape outside control as soon as possible.

With all respect to the A.N.U., we feel that the College will be better able to serve its students and the community as an independent though overshadowed body than as a kindergarten wing of the National University.

The Australian National University represents in its extreme form that formlessness of character of modern universities which is symbolized by their avoidance of city names—the University of Oxford is a world university located in Oxford; the University of East Ruritania is, we suspect, intended to serve no more than East Ruritania.

The University of Canberra will be fortunate in carrying the authority of the national capital in its name to enhance the standing of both its awards and its opinions. Eventually, these will achieve the prestige they earn, but a comparison of our staff with that of other justly reputed Australian universities should leave us confident of our capabilities.

As university of the capital rather than university of the nation we have a more obvious and no less important task than our sister university. Every year sees a further flow to Canberra of future administrators, their minds influenced by any of eight Australian universities or by none. Here we shall have a unique opportunity to modify and assimilate the modes of thought of people who, by the way they exercise their abilities, could make or mar the Commonwealth. Whatever the defects of centralism in government, it makes it increasingly possible to "serve the national city, and through it the nation."

The University of Canberra is also in an especially favourable position to encourage the development of distinctive Australian expression in the arts. Like the National University it draws students from all over Australia, but only here are other elements largely absent. The A.N.U. may foster international feeling, but scarcely Australian feeling.

In both these fields of influence the students who come to us from the Near North will play an important part. In the arts, our near neighbours are part of the cultural heritage of modern Australia; in politics and human relations we will have the privilege and responsibility of fostering a mutual understanding and co-operation which should be to our common advantage.

These are unusually great demands to be made of so small a body as our University will be, and in other respects also our status is unusual. Thus it will not be suitable for us thoughtlessly to follow conventional university patterns; to meet our peculiar responsibilities we must minimize the impact of our defects and exploit fully our peculiar advantages. —J.L.C.

DEMOCRACY IN THE UNIVERSITY

In the English-speaking world there are two University systems—the British and the American—which differ in certain fundamental respects. As a decision must very soon be made on the form to be taken by the new University of Canberra, we should be balancing the merits of these systems.

The basic objective of the American University system may be expressed as higher education for all; for the British University system, this basic objective may be expressed as higher education only for those possessing certain relatively exacting qualifications and so most capable of benefiting from it.

There can be no doubt which of these two is more in line with democratic philosophy.

The American University system has been severely criticised—often by people who have had no personal experience of it—

on the grounds that it is intellectually lowbrow, that it is exclusively sports-minded, or that its standards are too low.

Taken in the narrowest sense such criticisms may be true of some Universities in the U.S.A. But they miss the significant point, which is that far more men and women are able to have a "College" education under the American than under the British system.

Supporters of the British system regard the University as a training ground for the professions. They point out that a person with an incurably feeble voice could not hope for success in dramatic work; similarly a person with a low I.Q. is unfitted for University education, which is specialised and requires a keen intelligence.

If a University requires matriculation as the qualification for entry, its students will in-

A Letter to the Editor

Dear Ma'am,

Your editorial, "The College in 1960" was around the mark, but time and the A.N.U. wait for no good woman and now it seems that the College must "go it alone."

[The editorial referred to is Maris King's criticism of the continued deferment of a decision on the future status of the College in "Woroni" 1956/9 of July 24.]

Undoubtedly, as you say, the attracting and holding of good staff is part of the answer to a successful future of the College. That will be a matter for our Council and the Government—comparable pay and conditions to that in other Australian Universities and that sort of thing. Students cannot be indifferent to such questions but what about some of the issues that get just as near home from other angles?

You mention buildings. Yes! They help a University's prestige at least two ways— attract students and give the place a worthwhile University atmosphere. And besides, what with the Canberra climate . . . !

But what students come here for is a degree—a good degree. The College must give a degree which can bear inspection. What students in transit want to know is: what degree are they working for? At the moment a Melbourne degree—but what degree for those finishing in 1958? . . . 1959? . . . 1960?

A degree is a meal ticket when we've stripped all the fancy wrapping from it. What sort of meal ticket does the class of 1958 or 1959 stand to face the hard cold world with? What sort of views has the S.R.C. on this subject? What is it putting forward to the College authorities? This is urgent business—graduates must eat; some even have hopes of eating well.

Putting first things first, though, there is the matter of matriculation. The future of the College is wrapped up not only with good staff but with more good students. What are the matriculation requirements for 1958? . . . 1959? . . . 1960?

The College at present applies Melbourne requirements. What are the S.R.C. views on these? We have heard some grumbles about them—especially about the way they apply their adult matriculation rules. Some fellows have given the College away altogether on account of the way such application has hit them personally. Can we count on the College to apply a little more humanity and common sense to adult matriculation when it takes over its own affairs?

We do not want standards let down right and left—all our degrees would suffer; the meal ticket would decline in value. Let us leave that to the FA. But if a man demonstrates his capacity for University work by succeeding in University work why say, "O.K., you are matriculated;

include only people of average or above-average intelligence. In excluding those whose intelligence is below the average, the University is following a common-sense policy.

In addition, such people say, consideration must be given to the obligations of the University to the community. Its degrees carry an implicit guarantee, not only that the student has done a minimum of work, but also that he has a minimum level of intelligence. If the University has no control over its entrants it cannot give such a guarantee.

Opponents of the British system are, on the whole, strong supporters of the more democratic American system, and their protests are based on the view that the British system leads to the development of an "intellectual aristocracy," with

CAPITAL FOR THE UNIVERSITY

A decision on the future of the College has been made and thus we have reached both an end and a beginning—an end to the waiting and the wondering, to the discussion of pros and cons, and a beginning of progress.

Progress cannot be made without plans, and in the planning for our future it is not only the College Council and Administration which is concerned, but everyone who has any connexion with the College. And in this planning the students must play an important part. The accumulated stock with which the new University establishes itself in business will consist principally of the experience of its members; your thoughts are part of its capital.

The Students' Association, through its executive body, the S.R.C., has from time to time given considerable thought to planning for the future, but, understandably, tangible results have been few. Now that we know where we are going, it is time for the thoughts of students to take clear shape and expression.

There are many questions touching our future on which the final decisions must be taken by the College, but in which students have a vital interest. The College authorities have always been ready to listen to student opinion and will be no less ready to do so now. We must hope, therefore, that students, including those who have abstained from the often unreal debates which have proceeded previously, will have something to offer on such questions as the site for the University of Canberra, the style of its buildings, the provision of student amenities, and the type of courses which should be offered.

It is possible that our site, when we get it, will be at a considerable distance from the heart of Canberra. Should we vote for location in Dickson under the shadow of Mt. Ainslie; in Campbell close to our friends at the Royal Military College, or perhaps somewhere beyond the suburbs on the other side of the River? And in what style should our buildings be—will we emulate the "dreaming spires of Oxford" or follow modern Australian architectural trends?

Most of us would like to see a Union Building complete with such facilities as a theatre, showers, cafeteria, etc. Should the authorities build this for us or should we build it ourselves? If the latter then we want an active fund-raising body, and there is no reason why it should not begin its work at once.

These are only some of the issues which must occupy us from now on. Let us give to such questions the serious thought which their importance warrants, for in this way we may all share in the birth of the University of Canberra. —M.E.K.

now do the subjects you have tackled successfully all over again." Has the S.R.C. been working on that one?

Then there are courses. Some of the Melbourne subjects do not seem to be well tailored to the Canberra consumer. Perhaps the standing of the old meal ticket will not take too wholesale a tampering with course contents the moment the Melbourne bonds drop from our wrists, so to speak. But really you know in subjects A and B a pretty thorough overhaul could bring only gain for us in Canberra. (No names, no pack drill!)

There might be something to be said for some of our better and more serious students getting together at the end of 1956 and 1957 with Professors and lecturers of particular subjects for post-mortems of some of the

courses as they stand at present, with an eye to something a little better in the future? Has the S.R.C. had a thought on this one?

But there will be no dissent from your conclusion, Ma'am—we must have some decisions and that quickly. Only then will our staff and our students and our intending students have something firm to plan on and build on. For some this is an academic matter in every sense: by 1958 they will have seized their meal ticket and gone their way. But for the rest of us, Ma'am? Well, as I said, it's pretty much a bread and butter matter. We have an interest—a pressing and intimate interest. We are counting on the S.R.C. to watch and urge our interest. What about it?

Yours, etc.
ARTS IV (Repeat)

APPLICATIONS

are invited

for the position of

EDITOR
PROMETHEUS
1957

Ability unnecessary

Enthusiasm vital

forward applications to
Miss Joan Thomson,
Secretary, S.R.C.

C. MASTERMAN.

Hope for Prometheus PROMETHEUS REDIVIVUS

The present number of "Prometheus," as the Editor points out, is the first to appear in five years. The magazine was first printed in 1933 and continued to appear annually until the difficulties of war-time publication put a temporary stop to it. It did not resume publication till 1949 and ceased again after 1950.

Mr. Edwards, in the great tradition of editors of university magazines, speaks bitterly of his constituency: "Conceived in a workman's hostel and nurtured by staff contributions, this 'Prometheus' is the students' protest against the laziness of their fellow-travellers and the negligence of the powers-that-be." It may be some comfort to him that, apart from the place of conception, the magazines of the Universities of Sydney and Melbourne would provide long lines of ghostly editors to echo his words.

As a matter of fact this issue bears out the biological view that, provided the parents are of good stock, it does not matter where conception takes place: a paddock is as good as a palace. Mr. Edwards has produced a magazine of literature, criticism and social discussion which can hold its own with any of the current year's issues of "Meanjin" or "Southerly," and I think rather above the last issue of "M.U.M." He is right, of course, in feeling that it is heavily weighted with contributions from the staff and outsiders. "M.U.M." is more definitely a students' magazine, but perhaps not quite so much more as the Editor of "Prometheus" appears to think. The day of the old-model students' journal, a sort of sophisticated school-magazine by and for students, seems to be passing. The institution of the university newspaper has made it quite out of date. The new model is a serious intellectual journal to which both staff and students contribute and which seeks contributions from authorities outside the university as well as within it. In the absence of anything like a general University Quarterly in this country, such a magazine may be assured of contributors and fills a real place in the intellectual life of our universities. Mr. Edwards'

issue of "Prometheus" is a model of what such a magazine could be and demonstrates his ability and imagination as an editor. It is to be hoped that both the student body and the demonic forces he refers to as "the powers-that-be" will recognise what is, I think, quite a remarkable achievement.

Nearly all the articles raise and discuss real issues and there is remarkable range and variety from L. F. Crisp on the political rights and obligations of university teachers and the symposium on atheism by Arndt, Webster and Beddie, to Oscar Beran on the new sources of power that Science is developing, Khin Than Myint's picture of the religious architecture of her own land and Leonie Kramer's suggestion of a new source for enquiry into the origins and character of Australian fiction.

The verse, as is to be expected, does not maintain the same standard. L. H. Allen's fine translations of the classics, which are also fine poems in their own right, and the two poems by David Campbell are good. The others all have merit in some degree. And that versatile woman, Maris King, has a charming story either from the Chinese or about China — I am not expert enough to tell.

It is hoped that this issue of "Prometheus" will encourage the Students' Representative Council to see that it does not lapse again and that they will continue to find editors as good as Mr. Edwards.

I might offer him, or possibly his printers, one suggestion for the future: it is the practice in magazines of this sort nowadays to have a special section for poetry. Printers of course love to use poems as "fill-ins" for blank spaces at the ends of articles, but this is a somewhat niggardly and disrespectful way to treat the Sacred Nine.

A. D. HOPE

CULTURE AND PERSONALITIES

When you go around asking people what they think is or should be the function of a University, it is only natural that you should be given many different answers. But there is one point on which quasi-unanimity is reached—that is that a University is an institution where you go to get "Culture," and that the Degree it grants to its students on completion of their course is supposed to avouch the acquisition of the same. When you try to get some more specific meaning into or out of "Culture" with a big C, confusion is more often than not the result.

The proceeding, however, seems to provide a justification for our giving of culture the following operational definition—"Culture is what you have when you have completed a University degree."

In what follows I shall limit myself to consideration of the Faculty of Arts — indeed it is claimed by all in the know that this faculty is, culturally speaking, the heart of a University. In any event, it is the only one about which I know vaguely something. Let us then review the Melbourne set-up for Arts degrees.

The field of knowledge considered as suitable material for study towards a B.A. degree is divided into four Groups. Broadly speaking, we find in Group I, Languages; Group II, History, Economics, Political Science; Group III, Philosophy, Pure Mathematics; Group IV,

Psychology, Applied Mathematics, Statistics, and a miscellany of Sciences.

The requirements of the degree are such that students whose main interests, and so their majors and sub-majors, fall within two of these groups, have of necessity to secure a pass in a subject in each of the two remaining groups in order to complete their degree.

These two subjects will be at first year level, in two different branches, and it is only sensible to expect that, in most cases, at least one of the two will offer no interest whatever to the student, but will be instead a very rich source of frustration indeed. However, such are the requirements for the degree, and in order to receive that Hallmark of Culture, the student must go through with them.

A man who claims to be "cultured" cannot afford not to have a fair coverage of the whole field, it is said; and these subjects provide him with background. But do they? Of course those subjects which have to be done will be done, but in such a spirit that their educational value seems rather negative.

I had suggested on one occasion that Matriculation requirements be made such as to ensure a reasonable coverage, and that more freedom be given to students in the designing of their courses. Without realizing it, I had thereby committed a deadly sin against Culture, and was favouring Specialization, the latter to be taken apparently

THE COLLEGE AND THE FUTURE

Of approximately 350 students enrolled at the Canberra University College in degree or diploma courses, the great majority are drawn from Canberra and Queanbeyan, and scarcely any of our full-time students are not residents of these places. Thus we have a population of 40,000 supporting a University population of 350. Assuming that this ratio will not change, the University will have, when Canberra's population reaches its projected 100,000, a student population of 900 to 1000. An unusually large proportion even at this enlarged student population will, however, be part-timers.

The chief purpose behind the education for public servants and 1932 was to provide tertiary education for public servants the children of public servants, many of whom could be expected to pursue careers in the Public Service. It is natural, then, that the courses offered by the College should be those most useful to the public service — Arts, Law and Commerce. Furthermore the installation and operation of such faculties requires practically no expensive equipment, an important point for an institution which relies heavily on Government for its finance. It is for reasons such as these that the C.U.C. has developed into a College of the Liberal Arts.

Whether or not the College has fulfilled its purpose in years gone by is a moot point; but the important question now is whether we should be content for it to fulfil only those purposes when it becomes autonomous. If it is to become a true University and not to remain an appendage of the Public Service Board Training Centre, there must be development in many ways.

Council has recognized the need for Science Courses and has taken the first steps towards implementing them. It should also consider such fields as Agricultural Science and Forestry — fields which would be useful to the regions adjoining Canberra. Public Administration and Oriental Studies, in which some progress has already been made, are departments which could well be strengthened. In all these fields the College could serve Canberra and its surrounding districts and it is here that we should concentrate our effort. For engineering, on the other hand, the little demand there is could be met by an adequate technical college.

But the full development of the College into a University depends on its transformation into a regional university. While it is inherent in the nature of Canberra that the College will always have a large number of part-time students, it is essential that the number of full-time students be increased. And if we are to attract full-time students from the regions around Canberra there must be a Hall of Residence in which they can live. It is not necessary to build anything as lavish as the A.N.U. University House, but we might well look to International House in Melbourne as a model. In recent years the College has worked hard to obtain funds for International House; it is time now that it began to work for an International House of its own.

W. THORN

without qualifications and in all cases as the antithesis of the former.

The least that can be said of that sort of argument is that it is somewhat inconsistent, for few will dispute that an "Honours" Degree, if only by virtue of its name, has a higher "Cultural" value than the Ordinary Degree. Yet the requirements for "Honours" Degrees in the various schools do not appear to demand that at least one sub-

AND EDWARDS FOR HOPE

"Now the labourer's task is o'er,
Now the battle-day is past;
Now upon the farther shore
Lands the voyager at last."

Ellerton's hymn was written for the burial of the dead, but the lines I have quoted here might be applied equally well to the renaissance of the literary magazine "Prometheus" after its five-year medieval torpitude.

And now that life has been restored, it may be of advantage to stop scrambling metaphors in favour of something else.

Why, it may be asked, has "Prometheus" been revived? Why have a magazine at all?

A partial answer has been given by Professor Hope in another context:

Very few people realise the importance of a good literary magazine in the intellectual life of a country. I think it can best be put by saying that it does for civilization what roads do for it at a material level. It is an essential means of communication and for the interchange of creative thinking. Without good journals, as every scientist, as every businessman knows in their particular fields, the whole process tends to stagnate, the results of their work cannot be made public. A good literary journal provides a forum of discussion not only on literary and artistic questions but on the whole field of intellectual interests. It is the nursery of young writers, the place where works of promise can get a hearing before they reach the stage of publication in book form. It is the medium of exchange for established writers, the focus of the creative life of a community and the window into the work of the mind in the very process of crystallisation. It is almost the only outlet in a country like Australia for the essential work of criticism which keeps or should keep literature healthy, adventurous and vigorous. For only in this medium can critics find the space to do their job properly. In addition, in a young country which possesses hardly any academic literary journals, it is to magazines like blank that the scholarly investigation and assessment of the past must look for its outlet.

The irrepressible Vincent Buckley and his co-editor of M.U.M. 1952 took things a stage further when in their editorial they wrote as follows:

We embarked on this venture with enthusiasm and an ambitious plan. Few of us could be impressed by Australia's literary publications. To sponsor creative writing under student auspices seemed to us a worthy ideal. . . . With such a scheme the University could fulfil a proper function, become a hub of the intellectual and artistic life of the community, while both students and staff would be stimulated to write."

Because I agreed with the general principles behind these points of view I joined with other students in campaigning for the renewal of "Prometheus." I believed then, as I do now, that there was ample need in Australia for another literary magazine: and that there was need in Canberra for a home-produced article.

I thought, further, that a university should give a lead to the general public in producing such a magazine, and that it was part of a university's function to raise the mental and moral tone of the community in this way. That is, I shared with my canonical namesake the opinion that "a university should seek to make society aware of what society ought to want."

Perhaps there is an element of bravado and braggadocio in the holding of these beliefs, just as there may be an element of wishful thinking in the purpose behind my foreword. This "Prometheus," I declared, "aims both to provide an outlet for student opinion in the national capital, and to indicate to readers that the College has not died. It is intended as a spark to the slow growth of the university tradition in the College. "Prometheus" is our expression of faith in the value of creative activity and literary exercise in the formation of the individual personality and the preservation of our society." It may be, too, that in trying to publicise and draw attention to the College I am committing the gravest of Messelian sins.

Yet it all seems to me to be worthwhile, and quite apart from any consideration of the standard attained in the present issue the decision to revive "Prometheus" is one for which the S.R.C. deserves some praise. The actual production of the 1956 issue has been a co-operative concern involving many workers, to all of whom I owe my grateful thanks.

Finally, to coin a baneful word, I desire that the revival of "Prometheus" be permanentified in future years.

D. G. EDWARDS.

ject be taken in each of the Groups I, II, III and IV.

So that I am left wondering.

"Ordinary" culture is a bit of I, II, III, IV, but you can get "Honours" culture with only a bit of I, II, III; a somewhat bigger bit, I grant you, but still, no IV. And then, if more of I or II or III, what about "Specialization."

The University of Canberra is in the process of being born, if

one may say so. In the next few months, it is going to draw up its Degree Requirements. Perhaps they might see a point in my speculations, a point which might be enlarged into a spot by considering that honours schools are not open to part-time students. And chances are that, for a few years to come they will still be the majority at Canberra.

SYLLABIC

KILLING THE SACRED COW

Some hard facts, apparently unknown to Governments, but which are forcibly brought home to the man in the street as he over-spends his weekly pay packet.

Australians seem to have an in-built liking for protection, not realising that even if it does not take the form of quantitative restriction of imports it is one of those controls we are all so anxious to remove. While our high costs and prices are said to be ruining the country by the effects of internal inflation and by pricing us out of overseas markets, thus making it impossible for us to pay our way in overseas trade, Government action seems to be confined to raising the level of protection by imposing more and more import restrictions.

Yet in a time of rising prices one of the easiest ways to lower the general price level would be to remove the costs that tariffs and other protection add to our economy. Why then do we maintain this price-lifting system?

The die-hards give the obvious answer that without protection our balance of payments would be even worse than it is, but we hope to show that as with most obvious answers the truth of this is doubtful.

The incubus of protection is a legacy from the days of Federation, when, although New South Wales was able to obtain moderations of the tariff in return for her adherence, the Victorians, probably rightly in the then circumstances, held out for protection for Australia. The manufacturing interests and later some of our less efficient primary industries were able to build this initial tariff into the farce of "protection-all round."

Now that we have these tariffs the protectionist lobby in Canberra and its hangers-on—a substantial majority of Australians—have made them politically irremovable. Moreover the difficulty of removing them looks even greater than it in fact is. Tariffs raise the cost structure all round, and many industries which could survive under free trade find their costs so increased by the tariff that they have had to seek tariff protection themselves and by now imagine it essential.

WHY PROTECTION?

The principal ends of our protectionist policy are encouragement of secondary industry, which in turn enables us to maintain a larger population; the general encouragement to development given by a firm industrial sector; and, more recently, the equalization of income by support of the wage-earning and manufacturing sector at the expense of the high-income export sector. All these stem from the idea that the whole country, and not merely the graziers, should be able to ride on the sheep's back.

In an infant country protection to achieve these ends was good common sense: now that we should be thinking of growing up it is beginning to seem like uncommon nonsense.

There cannot be many motor mechanics nowadays who bake their own bread, tailor their own suits and brew their own beer. The man in the street apparently finds that it pays him to earn by some special talent the means of exchange with which he can obtain most of the necessities of life. Australia is in precisely the same position. Her special talents are the production of many primary goods and a few manufactures; she should be concentrating on these and obtaining by trade all her other needs. The motor mechanic may indulge in home carpentry, but a nation does not need hobbies.

At about the time Cook discovered Eastern Australia, Adam Smith pointed out the advantages of division of labour both

within and between nations. Part of the benefit of the one discovery has been lost by ignoring the other.

Australia has three types of industries: export industries such as wool and iron and steel, whose advantages of climate, resources, skill of local workers and so on make it possible for them to sell at prices competitive with those of other nations; sheltered industries such as transport, entertainment, processing of locally-produced foodstuffs, and retailing, whose products cannot be imported; and protected industries, the exotic growths whose natural disadvantages permit them to survive only behind a wall of protection.

Our present policy supports the manufacturers and wage-earners in protected industries at the expense of high-income exporters. Unfortunately it also raises prices and wages all round, forces some export industries to seek protection in their turn, and, through high costs, limits the output of some of our sheltered industries.

The last effect is apparent in the state of the national road system—high labour costs have made it impracticable to meet the legitimate demand for a generally desired service.

If tariffs and other protection were reduced or abolished there would be an immediate fall in prices; labour costs could then be reduced correspondingly without the wage-earner taking any cut in spending power. It is usually suggested that abolition of protection would also give us half-a-million unemployed, but the freeing of trade can be taken in easy stages. There should be no doubt of the possibility of absorbing a substantial labour force into development works, housing, and the expansion of efficient industries, and no politically wise government would reduce protection so rapidly as to cause unemployment.

As a sop to the manufacturing interests it should be noted that the first to be thrown into unemployment would be the members of the Tariff Board.

TAX OR TARIFF?

There are several methods of strengthening the Australian economy, and it will be seen that those proposed below are independent—any one can be adopted even though the others are not.

The first is to remove protection of the least efficient protected industries—this can be done, whether or not we intend eventually to do away with all protection.

Whatever protection it is desired to retain should be carried out by a system of taxes and subsidies. This would bring out into the open the costs which protection imposes. Merely to see the amounts involved might shock the taxpayer into some new thinking on this subject, but there are more tangible benefits to be obtained.

Protected industries would have a much greater incentive to efficiency if they received an obvious subsidy which could easily be reduced or cut out if they allowed their secure position to lull them into inefficiency.

Industries, using protected products would incur lower costs, since the cost of protection would be borne by the community as a whole instead of being concentrated on the users and consumers of protected goods.

Protection by tariffs adds to the cost of all goods, either directly or through higher wages and prices. Protection by subsidies adds only to the costs of locally produced goods. It is

THE ROLE OF THE UNIVERSITY

It is to be hoped that the University will be able to take the throes of planning which must overtake the College now that it knows that its future lies in autonomy, those who have the task of building for the future will not be so overwhelmed by the extent and complexity of their task that they will fail to consider a question of grave importance—the role of the University.

The proper function of any University is that of disseminating learning—for the sake of learning—and not, as is thought in many quarters, to disseminate learning for the sake of fulfilling a particular social need. A University should not seek justification for its existence and activities by pointing out that through its training more technicians will be provided, or the economy will be run more efficiently, or the health of the people will be cared for better. The only social need with which it is concerned is the need to spread learning throughout the community; any other is irrelevant to its purpose and functions.

By its location in the Commonwealth's seat of government the future University of Canberra stands in more danger than most of forgetting, or, at the least, of putting aside this primary function. Not only are the majority of its students either public servants or people who expect to build a career for themselves in the public service, but its staff are in closer touch with administrators than is the case with other Universities. Many of its students undertake courses with the primary objective of qualifying themselves for promotion in the Service and the subjects they study are chosen with that end in view. As such people progress through the ranks of the public service it may be that the nation will be better administered as a result of their University training, but, so far as the University is concerned, this is of no moment. The University does not exist to improve the standard of the public service—it exists—to repeat—to disseminate knowledge for its own sake. But it may not be easy, in such circumstances, for the University to avoid shaping its affairs in a direction which will be at-

true that protection by subsidies entails higher taxes which will lead to some general increase in prices and reduce take-home pay, but prices will still be lower than under tariff protection. Increased production resulting from lower costs in the export industries will then bring exporters an increase in real income which will spread into other sectors of the community.

In view of the complexity of other forms of protection, particularly quantitative import restrictions, administrative costs would be substantially reduced by the subsidy system.

Under protection by subsidies excess demand can more readily spill over into imports, thereby lessening the danger of internal inflationary pressures. As things are now the balance of payments would not stand this and at such times the Government would have to fall back on its taxing powers. Provided the Government pursues a wise policy on reserves, however, this feature of the subsidy system is an effective safety-valve in a full-employment economy.

It has been indicated that a reduction in tariff protection would encourage the sheltered industries, among which are transport and communications and all our major developmental projects. The increase in productivity which would result from greater emphasis on this sector is obvious. Service industries not strictly included but which could well be expanded are shipping and insurance, for which at present we rely

heavily on British and European firms. Development of these industries would also help the balance of payments situation.

CUSTOMS UNION

A sound if rather spectacular step in the right direction would be customs union with New Zealand. Mr. Holland has recently been outspoken about our restrictions on trade with New Zealand, and if offered the choice "free trade or no concessions" he might very well choose free trade. Broadly speaking, the effects of such a customs union would be to wipe out our butter production and part of our whole milk industry and to encourage our secondary industries and a trans-Tasman carrying trade.

Dairying land is well-watered and of high fertility and should readily find alternative uses, probably under more intensive farming which would again enable us to support a higher population. If New Zealand was unlucky it might turn out that our dairying industries, spurred by competition, would increase their efficiency to a point where they could undersell the New Zealanders.

Australia's main economic problems are inflation and balance of payments difficulties. Both of these are essentially a result of consuming more than we produce. If by any or all of the methods outlined we increase our production it may be possible to defeat inflation, balance our payments, and still have something over as a bonus to the consumer.

—Two Canberra Economists

discussion, concerning the establishment of science courses at the College. It is natural enough that both the College authorities and the people of Canberra should be keen to see this happen, but the prospect should not be viewed without reservations. For in science dangerous tendencies are present to an even greater degree. Scientists tend to adopt utilitarian attitudes and are more inclined to justify their activities in terms of particular needs.

There can be no doubt that the demand for scientific training is growing and a place must be made for its development. But science must be kept in its place—it must not be allowed to monopolize the resources of the University and every effort must be made to prevent attitudes common among physical scientists—concepts of "social engineering" and the like—from permeating the University.

The Canberra University College, soon to be transformed into the University of Canberra, is at the cross-roads and must now choose the direction it is to follow. If it is to attain the prestige which Australians would want the University of Canberra to have, it must take care to avoid the hazards that lie before it. It can only become a great University if it clearly understands its proper role.

LEBENSRAUM

All who have attended our present College will have observed or experienced the near complete suffocation of student life which results from the fact that part-time students form the overwhelming majority of College membership. We all know that the reason for the predominance of part-time students is the presence in a young and small city of the Commonwealth's central administration. Because the city is young and small, it has bred few of its own University freshmen; and because it is the centre of administration, most of those attending the present College are Public Servants first and students as an afterthought.

Many such students are married and have families; many have already experienced a full university life elsewhere; in

both cases, the desire to participate in the College's stunted student life easily wears thin. The real misfortune of Canberra University College is always remarked to be the absence of that most valued possession of a university: a large number of full-time students generating their traditional extra-curricular activities; combining in thinking, talking and doing.

But the presence of Government in Canberra has resulted in one circumstance that could be turned to account for our new University. Among the city's immigrant Public Servants, now dispersed in several hostels, are many part-time students of the present College who would far more readily come together to promote student life if in a Residential College.

An attempt has already been made on a small scale to assemble such people in a single hostel, by reserving Narellan House for students. But there is a gap far wider than even snobbery can span between a hostel of students and a University residential College.

The need for a residential College in the University of Canberra is plain and real. The means of acquiring such a College are not obvious. But at the present time an excellent opportunity is available, for during the next few years the Commonwealth will have to provide accommodation for the increased Canberra population resulting from transfer of Melbourne departments. Perhaps in the reshuffling of accommodation that must then occur the Commonwealth would be prepared to see some of its grant to the University of Canberra spent in transforming into a residential College the present Havelock House, well-favoured in location and size for becoming the University of Canberra's first residential College.

Even if Havelock cannot be obtained no real difficulties stand in the way of providing a Hall of Residence. When in the near future new hostel construction becomes necessary, the first effort should be diverted to building such a Hall, which, without reducing the effect on accommodation problems, would offer substantial benefits to the new University of Canberra.

—N. R. MILLER

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